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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF-AWARENESS AND INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION BEHAVIOR IN ISLAMIC STUDENT ASSOCIATION (HMI) CADRES IN MEDAN CITY

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Abstract

Self-awareness offers a conceptual basis for understanding how individuals recognize their thoughts, emotions, and behavioral tendencies during interpersonal interactions. This article examines the conceptual relationship between self-awareness and interpersonal communication behavior in the context of Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam (HMI) cadres in Medan. Prepared for the March 2025 study period, the article adopts a narrative literature review approach without interviews, questionnaires, or respondents. The discussion synthesizes literature on self-reflection, insight, emotion regulation, and high-quality listening. The synthesis proposes that understanding personal reactions may support more deliberate communication, openness to feedback, and clarification during disagreements. However, self-awareness does not automatically produce constructive communication because behavioral skills, relational conditions, and organizational expectations may shape its expression. The HMI context provides a setting for conceptual application rather than a source of empirical findings. The article concludes that self-awareness is a relevant consideration in interpersonal communication development, while the proposed relationships require contextual empirical examination before conclusions can be drawn about HMI cadres in Medan.

Keywords: Islamic Student Association; interpersonal communication; narrative literature review; self-awareness; student organization.

INTRODUCTION

Interpersonal communication has an important role in the life of student organizations because it is a means of exchanging information, forming relationships, and solving common problems. The continuity of organizational activities requires interaction that allows members to convey ideas and understand the needs of others. Communication problems arise when the message intended by the speaker is understood differently by the recipient. Therefore, the discussion of interpersonal communication needs to pay attention to the behavior that appears as well as the process of self-understanding that accompanies the interaction.

Self-awareness is one of the relevant concepts to understand this process. Grant et al. (2002) distinguish self-reflection as the activity of examining thoughts, feelings, and behaviors from *insight* as the clarity of understanding the experience. This distinction shows that self-awareness is not always synonymous with self-understanding. A person can often think about his actions, but have not been able to explain the reasons for his actions or determine what needs to be improved.

In interpersonal communication, self-understanding can be used to consider a person's reasons for choosing a message, defending an opinion, or giving a specific response. Recognition of disappointment, for example, can help a person examine whether his or her response is related to the content of the conversation or his or her assessment. However, such relationships are conceptual possibilities that need to be explained carefully. Awareness of emotions does not in itself demonstrate the ability to manage communication responses.

The cadres of the Islamic Student Association (HMI) in the city of Medan are the context for the implementation of the discussion in this article. The interaction of student organizations provides a relevant situation to examine the delivery of ideas, the acceptance of criticism, the division of responsibility, and the resolution of

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differences of opinion. The situation is used as a context of analysis, not as a statement about the conditions that have been observed in HMI cadres. This article does not assume that all cadres have the same communication characteristics.

Communication behavior also needs to be understood from the experience of the person receiving the message. Itzchakov et al. (2022) explain the relationship between quality listening and the perception that a person is understood, appreciated, and cared for. This perspective shows that communication is not sufficiently judged based on the speaker's intention. Attention also needs to be paid to the way the response is delivered and how the interlocutor interprets the interaction.

This article discusses the relationship between self-awareness and interpersonal communication behavior through a review of the narrative literature. The question posed is how self-awareness can be conceptually related to listening behavior, openness to feedback, expression of opinions, and response management when disagreements occur. The discussion also considers conditions that can limit the application of self-understanding in communication actions.

The purpose of this article is to compile a conceptual explanation of this relationship in the context of HMI cadres in the city of Medan. Its contribution lies in the relationship between the concept of self-psychology and communication actions in student organizations. The term relationship in the article refers to the theoretical relationship between concepts, without stating the existence of statistical correlations or causal influences on the group discussed.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Self-Awareness

Self-awareness is concerned with the individual's ability to notice and understand his or her internal experiences. Self-reflection allows a person to review thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, whereas*Insight*related to the clarity of understanding of the experience. Grant et al. (2002) point out the importance of distinguishing these two concepts in the discussion of self-regulation. This distinction helps explain why the habit of self-evaluation does not necessarily result in an understanding that can be used to change actions.

Sutton (2016) also shows that self-awareness has various consequences. His research identified results in the form of reflective self-development, acceptance, proactivity, and certain negative consequences. Thus, self-awareness needs to be discussed by paying attention to its form and results. Repetitive self-attention cannot be directly equated with reflection that helps individuals understand experiences more clearly.

In this article, self-awareness is placed as the ability to recognize internal circumstances and consider their relevance to communication actions. This definition includes the recognition of emotions, the purpose of speaking, the limitation of knowledge, and the tendency to respond. These aspects are the focus of conceptual discussions and are not used to score or group cadres based on their level of self-awareness.

London et al. (2023) discuss the development of self-awareness as a learning process that involves reflection, feedback, and experience. This perspective expands the discussion of self-awareness from the recognition of internal circumstances to the understanding of the relationship of the self to the social environment. In the context of this article, the idea becomes the basis for considering organizational interaction as a space for self-learning, without assuming that the process takes place the same for every cadres.

Interpersonal Communication Behavior

Interpersonal communication behavior refers to actions that are taken when a person builds and maintains interactions with others. In the scope of this article, these actions include delivering messages, giving speaking opportunities, asking questions, clarifying, and responding to feedback. Verbal and nonverbal behaviors need to be considered together because word choice, intonation, and expression can affect the meaning of messages.

Listening is a major concern because understanding of others is not only shown through the ability to speak. Itzchakov et al. (2022) link quality listening to processes of understanding, positive appreciation, and caring. Although related, listening behavior and the perception of responsiveness are different concepts. This difference is important so that silence, visible attention, and perceived feelings are not treated as the same thing all the time.

Based on this scope, interpersonal communication in an organization can be discussed through questions about how the message is conveyed and how mutual understanding is checked. The clarity of communication does not depend only on the length of the explanation. The opportunity to ask questions, the willingness to improve the message, and the attention to the interlocutor's responses are relevant actions to consider.

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Self-Awareness and Emotion Regulation

Recognition of emotions and management of emotions is a process that needs to be differentiated. A person can know that he is angry without successfully changing the way he or she responds. Gross (2015) discusses the regulation of emotions as a field of study related to the management of experiences and emotional expressions. The framework provides a foundation for understanding that recognizing emotional states is a different problem from choosing or implementing its management strategy.

In the discussion of communication, these differences prevent the conclusion that the person who understands his emotions must be able to maintain interaction. This article proposes that self-recognition can provide information to consider responses. The use of such information still requires supportive skills and conditions. Therefore, self-awareness is placed as one of the considerations in interpersonal communication.

Gross and John (2003) show that the different uses of emotion regulation strategies have implications for emotional experiences, social relationships, and well-being. The study reinforces the reasons for distinguishing awareness of emotions from how to manage them. In the discussion of interpersonal communication, attention needs to be directed to how understanding emotional states translate into responses, not just on the individual's ability to recognize their feelings.

Conceptual Relationships Between Constructs

The relationship discussed in this article consists of the recognition of the state of the self, the interpretation of the situation, and the consideration of the act of communication. The individual first pays attention to what he feels or thinks, then examines its relevance to the situation. The results of this understanding can be material for choosing how to convey a message or respond to others.

The flow is an analytical framework proposed in the article, not a mechanism that has been proven in HMI cadres in the city of Medan. The relationship between concepts can take place differently in different situations. The experience of communicating can also be a new material for understanding oneself, so the discussion needs to open up the possibility of mutual relationships.

METHOD

This article uses a narrative literature review approach with a study preparation period of March 2025. This approach is used to develop a conceptual discussion on the relationship between self-awareness and interpersonal communication behavior. The article does not involve respondents, interviews, questionnaires, or observations of HMI cadres in Medan City.

The discussion material is in the form of scientific publications related to self-reflection, self-understanding, emotion regulation, and listening behavior. The literature is used based on the relevance of the concept to the article question. This study does not apply a systematic review procedure and does not claim to have covered all available publications on this topic.

Analysis is carried out through a comparative reading of the concepts, scope, and arguments in the referenced sources. The discussion is developed by distinguishing the definition of self-awareness, identifying the communication behavior that is the focus, and arranging the possible relationship between the two. The similarity of ideas is used to build a synthesis, while the difference in concepts is used to clarify the boundaries of interpretation.

The application in the context of HMI cadres in Medan City is carried out through conceptual reasoning regarding the interaction situation of student organizations. Illustrations of the division of tasks, submission of criticism, and differences of opinion are used to explain the application of ideas. The illustration is not an incident reported by members of the organization or the results of field data collection.

The reliability of the argument is maintained by distinguishing the findings of the source, the author's interpretation, and the proposed implementation. Conclusions are compiled according to the scope of the literature used. With these limits, the article provides a basis for thinking to understand the topic and is not used to establish the psychological conditions or actual communication patterns of a group.

The selection of narrative literature studies refers to Baumeister and Leary's (1997) discussion of the development of arguments through literature and Snyder (2019) regarding literature review as a research methodology. The literature is used to compare concepts, construct theoretical relationships, and identify explanatory boundaries. This approach is in accordance with the purpose of the article to develop conceptual understanding, without claiming to carry out systematic reviews or empirical relationship testing.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Synthesis of the Relationship of Self-Awareness to Interpersonal Communication Behavior

The results of the study are presented as a conceptual synthesis. Self-awareness is positioned as a source of information about internal circumstances that can be considered when communicating. Communication behavior is an action that is carried out in relation to others. The relationship between the two needs to be explained through a process that connects the understanding of the self with the choice of action in a certain situation.

This synthesis does not consider self-understanding to be a guarantee of constructive communication. The individual may be able to explain his or her emotions, but do not yet have the right way to express his or her objections. On the contrary, one can follow the rules of conversation due to the demands of the situation without conducting deep self-reflection. Both possibilities demonstrate the need to distinguish between internal experience and communication behavior.

Table 1. Conceptual Mapping of Self-Awareness and Interpersonal Communication Behavior

Focus on self-awareness	Considerations in interaction	Relevant communication behaviors	Interpretation limits
Emotional recognition	Checking your condition before responding	Pausing and explaining objections	Recognizing emotions does not guarantee the ability to manage them
Understanding the purpose of speaking	Assess the purpose of the message delivery	Convey the intent more clearly	Clarity of intent still requires a comprehension check
Introduction of knowledge limitations	Checking what you don't understand	Ask questions and ask for clarification	Willingness to ask questions can be influenced by relationship situations
Reflection on action	Review responses after an interaction	Fix messages and act on misunderstandings	Reflection can stop without a change in action
Introduction of defensive tendencies	Check the reasons for dismissing feedback	Listening to and assessing the content of criticism	Criticism still needs to be judged based on content and context

The table is a development of the article's argument. The relationships on each line indicate the possible application of self-understanding, so it cannot be read as a measurement result. Mapping is used to clarify the actions that can be discussed when connecting self-awareness with communication in the organization.

Recognition of Emotions and Considerations Before Responding

An introduction to emotions can be discussed as an opportunity to examine the source of the reaction. In an illustration of an organizational meeting, a person may feel disappointed when his or her proposal is not accepted. Understanding the circumstances can be used to distinguish objections to the reason for the decision from feelings of disrespect. This distinction has the potential to help craft a message that is more appropriate to the problem.

However, giving a pause before speaking does not always indicate a process of self-awareness. Pauses can relate to confusion, caution, or limited speaking opportunities. Therefore, the application of the concept must pay attention to the meaning of the action for the perpetrator. This article does not establish that one form of behavior always reflects a particular psychological state.

Gross's (2015) emotion regulation framework helps clarify the difference between experiencing emotions and managing emotional responses. In the conceptual application of this article, being aware of anger can be material for determining the next step. Successfully changing a fixed response requires an additional process and cannot be deduced from the ability to mention emotions alone.

For the development of cadre communication, the focus that can be considered is the ability to explain problems and needs when raising objections. Attention is directed to the content of the message, the time of delivery, and the opportunity to get a response. This proposal is a practical consideration from a conceptual framework, not the test result of a training.

Understanding Self-Limitations and Listening Behavior

An introduction to knowledge limitations can provide reasons for asking questions. In an illustration of a work program discussion, members who do not understand the purpose of the activity can ask for an explanation

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before assessing the proposal. This allows the problem to be discussed based on clearer information. However, the willingness to acknowledge limitations can also depend on how the questions are received in the group.

This relationship suggests that listening behavior requires attention to oneself as well as to others. One needs to check whether one is understanding the message or just preparing a rebuttal. This examination is a proposal for the application of self-awareness. To find out if the process is happening in practice, evidence that goes beyond conceptual reasoning is needed.

Itzchakov et al. (2022) provide a basis for discussing listening as an interpersonal process related to understanding and appreciation. Its application in this article includes providing speaking opportunities, relevant questions, and clarification. However, these actions need to be assessed together with the interlocutor's experience so as not to stop at one-sided assessments.

In the context of student organizations, awareness of self-limitations can be placed as a consideration for maintaining a learning space. Members do not have to understand the entire issue before engaging in discussion. Willingness to ask questions and improve understanding can be part of the communication process, as long as the relationship between parties allows questions to be delivered safely.

Kluger and Itzchakov (2022) discuss listening as a phenomenon that involves speakers and listeners and is related to various outcomes in the organization. This perspective supports the discussion that the quality of listening needs to be understood through the involvement of both parties. Its application to student organizations is a conceptual development in this article; the results of research on the work environment are indirect evidence of the communication behavior of HMI cadres in the city of Medan.

Self-Reflection and Acceptance of Feedback

Feedback provides information about how a person's actions were received by others. Self-awareness can be used to examine the reasons for the acceptance or rejection of the information. Rejection may have to do with the content of the criticism, the way it was delivered, or the feeling of being threatened. Differentiating reasons is necessary so that responses are not based solely on initial impressions.

Accepting feedback does not mean agreeing to all criticism. Individuals still need to assess the clarity of the information, the basis for the assessment, and its relevance to the responsibilities being discussed. Thus, openness is placed as a willingness to consider, ask for explanations, and provide responses. This understanding avoids equating openness with non-judgmental compliance.

Sutton (2016) distinguishes the consequences of beneficial self-awareness from certain negative consequences. Such distinctions are relevant to consider the quality of reflection after receiving criticism. In the development of the argumentation of this article, useful reflection needs to be directed at understanding and possible follow-up, not just repetitive negative judgments of the self.

In the context of HMI cadres, its conceptual application can be in the form of a discussion of specific actions when evaluating activities. Feedback is directed to things that can be explained and improved. This consideration needs to be accompanied by attention to the way the critic communicates, because the responsibility for interaction does not only lie with the recipient of the criticism.

Self-Awareness in Conveying Differences of Opinion

Differences of opinion can be used as a space to examine the purpose of communication. Individuals can consider whether they want to clarify the problem, propose changes, or maintain a certain assessment. Understanding the purpose helps to formulate reasons related to the subject matter. However, a clear goal still needs to be conveyed through an understandable message.

An introduction to personal tendencies can also be evaluative. A person may tend to speak too quickly, avoid objections, or give lengthy explanations. Within the framework of this article, awareness of such tendencies can be used to adjust how to participate. Adjustments still need to take into account the situation and do not mean that all members should communicate in the same style.

In the illustration of organizational discussions, differences can be conveyed through explanations of reasons, questions about the basis of the decision, and alternative proposals. These actions help keep the conversation connected to the issues being discussed. This article proposes it as a possible implementation, without stating that this pattern has become a habit of HMI cadres in the city of Medan.

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The Role of Relationship and Organizational Conditions

Explanations that are only centered on self-awareness risk ignoring the condition of the relationship. Members who understand their objections do not necessarily have the opportunity to convey them. Conversation rules, relationships between members, and responses to criticism are conditions that need to be considered. In this article, these conditions are proposed as possible limiting relationships between self-understanding and communication behavior.

Therefore, communication development needs to include speaking opportunities and the way the group responds to differences. The encouragement to be open will be difficult to implement if the questions are always interpreted negatively. This statement is a reasoning about the appropriateness between the demands of communication and the conditions under which it is implemented, not an assessment of the culture of a particular HMI organization.

The relationship between self-awareness and communication can also be understood reciprocated. The response of others can provide material to evaluate the way of speaking, while the results of the evaluation can be used in subsequent interactions. This reciprocal framework expands the discussion by placing interaction as a source of self-learning. The existence and form of this process in HMI cadres still requires empirical examination.

Edmondson (1999) defines team psychological safety as a shared belief that the team environment allows for interpersonal risk-taking. His research links psychological safety to learning behaviors in work teams. This concept helps sharpen the argument that openness to communicate needs to be discussed alongside the condition of the relationship. In the context of this article, the opportunity to ask questions, acknowledge limitations, and raise objections are aspects worth considering, while the actual condition of the HMI organization still requires its own evidence.

Implications for Cadre Communication Development

Based on conceptual synthesis, communication development can consider reflective activities related to concrete experiences. Reflective questions can be directed to the purpose of the message, the response that emerges, the interlocutor's understanding, and the necessary follow-up. The approach helps to connect self-discussion with revisitable actions.

The next consideration is to provide opportunities to practice, listen, and ask for clarification. Members can be invited to check their understanding before giving a response. Its implementation needs to pay attention to the context of the relationship and the needs of the organization. This article does not state that these activities have proven to be effective for HMI cadres in the city of Medan.

Communication evaluation also needs to provide space for the receiving party. It is not enough to assess the success of speaking from the speaker. The opportunity to convey how the message is understood can help identify differences in interpretation. This proposal is a practical consequence of placing communication as an interpersonal process.

Sutton et al. (2015) reported that participants in self-awareness training in the work environment reported experiences in the form of increased appreciation for diversity, communication with colleagues, and self-confidence. The findings provide a reason to consider self-awareness development activities as communication development materials. However, its application to HMI cadres needs to be adjusted to the needs of the organization and evaluated before the same benefits can be stated.

Study Limitations

This article uses a narrative literature review with sources selected based on relevance to the focus of the discussion. This procedure allows for the development of arguments, but does not guarantee the completeness of the literature coverage. The resulting synthesis needs to be understood according to the limits of the sources and concepts used.

The article also does not contain evidence regarding the psychological state, organizational experience, or actual communication behavior of HMI cadres in Medan City. Thus, contextual descriptions cannot be used to group cadres or assess the quality of organizational communication. Further research can examine the suitability of the conceptual framework with the experience in clearly defined organizational units.

CONCLUSION

This study places self-awareness as a relevant concept for understanding individual considerations in interpersonal communication. Recognition of emotions, understanding the purpose of speaking, awareness of limited

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knowledge, and reflection on actions can be conceptually linked to listening behavior, clarification, receiving feedback, and conveying dissent.

The relationship does not take place automatically. Self-understanding needs to be distinguished from the ability to manage responses, while communication behavior needs to be read along with the condition of the relationship and the organization. Interaction experiences can also provide material to renew self-understanding, so that relationships between concepts are open to reciprocal processes.

In the context of HMI cadres in Medan City, this framework can be considered to develop organizational reflection and communication. The conclusion of the article is conceptual and does not establish statistical relationships, causal influences, or empirical characteristics of cadres. Its application and benefits need to be assessed according to needs and evidence in the context of the organization concerned.

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